

City of Springfield
Work Session Meeting

MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF
THE SPRINGFIELD CITY COUNCIL HELD
MONDAY, MARCH 6, 2006

The City of Springfield Council met in a work session in the Library Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon, on Monday, March 6, 2006 at 6:00 p.m., with Mayor Leiken presiding.

ATTENDANCE

Present were Mayor Leiken and Councilors Fitch, Ballew, Lundberg, Ralston, Woodrow and Pishioneri. Also present were Interim City Manager Cynthia Pappas, City Attorney Joe Leahy, City Recorder Amy Sowa and members of the staff.

Planning Commission Chair David Cole called the Planning Commission to order. Present were Planning Chair Cole and Commissioners Moe, Decker, Shaver, Beyer and Carpenter.

Mayor Leiken welcomed the Planning Commission and discussed the good relationship between the Planning Commission and City Council.

1. Annual Meeting of the City Council and Planning Commission.

Development Services Director Bill Spiry presented the staff report on this item. During the most recent Council goal-setting discussion, Council directed the Development Services Department to undertake an inventory and analysis of Springfield's residential lands. That work program is prepared and ready for Council discussion.

The Region 2050 project has reached a point where the participating jurisdictions are being asked to commit to a strategy "endorsing" a specific growth scenario. This commitment will require LCDC approval for content, compliance with Oregon Revised Statute, and separate agreements with each city and Lane County. Questions regarding whether this commitment is voluntary or obligatory, whether this strategy replaces acknowledged comprehensive plans, and whether or how future elected officials can withdraw from this consortium remain unanswered despite several direct requests for such answers from LCDC.

The attached Residential Lands Inventory (RLI) work program identifies each of the tasks that need to be completed to achieve a high level of confidence in the accuracy and timeliness of the data base. At the conclusion of this project, the Council and citizens of Springfield will have verifiable information about the quality and quantity of the City's residential inventory, and will be able to apply this information to the subsequent task of providing the suitable type, location and amount of residential land to accommodate projected demand for at least the next 20 years.

The attached Council Briefing Memorandum (CBM) on Region 2050 summarizes the current status of the project, including the latest growth scenario, population and employment allocations, community survey, and the continuing uncertainty of the legal standing of this commitment regarding future land use actions or political initiatives.

Mr. Grile discussed Region 2050. He said in 1999, Springfield and other jurisdictions in Lane County started the process of regional problem solving. He explained the purpose for this problem solving in relation to state approval for proposals. He discussed the process, including public input, and noted that the draft strategy had now been prepared. He said there were two issues of Region 2050: 1) the substance of the regional strategy; and 2) the legal framework that would allow any agreements to be implemented. Staff agreed that regional problem solving was a great idea; however, the statutes for this were brief and were written for more specific issues rather than this broader application. He referred to a letter from Councilor Lundberg to Lane Shetterly regarding Region 2050 and the response letter received from Mr. Shetterly. Mr. Grile said the discussion tonight between the Planning Commission and the City Council would be to determine whether or not there was legal support to uphold any decisions on this program.

Planning Manager Greg Mott discussed the Residential Lands Inventory (RLI). He said this was on staff's work program and an outline was included in the agenda packet. He said staff hoped the Planning Commission and the City Council would look over this outline and provide input on what else they might want to include in the work program. He referred to the timeline. The second part would be the supply and demand analysis. He said there could be an opportunity to get some outside services for that analysis.

Residential Lands Inventory:

Mayor Leiken referred to the RLI and asked if the Planning Commission was comfortable in looking at the RLI and if they had a timeline for looking into this.

Commissioner Beyer said he felt this was the most important thing the City Council and Planning Commission would do in the next twelve to eighteen months. He noted the increase in property values in Springfield due to the lack of available land. He said they were at the point in the planning cycle to take a broader look at what's available. He said he had concerns about the process laid out. The Planning Commission (PC) and the City Council (CC) needed to spend more hands-on time up front in this process. He said the PC and CC needed to become knowledgeable about the definitions set forth and needed to get agreements they were comfortable with. He had some recommendations regarding the committee for this project, which were outlined in a memo he had written to the PC and had been distributed to the CC and PC tonight.

Commissioner Carpenter questioned whether or not a valid number could be determined in this study without Eugene doing a parallel study. He said it was an issue of how many buildable lands were available in the entire Eugene/Springfield metropolitan area. He asked if Eugene had an interest in doing their RLI.

Mr. Mott said there was a single buildable lands inventory for the metropolitan area because there was a single urban growth boundary (UGB). The commercial, industrial and residential categories needed to support the projections for population for the community. To undertake a residential inventory in Springfield is a legitimate exercise to determine what we have left. The expectation was that the populations in Eugene and Springfield would continue to increase. He said if there was an expectation of population growth in Springfield, we needed to determine whether or not we had sufficient land to support that growth. If Springfield consumed our own buildable land at a rate that exceeded the outyear for the plan, we had a problem. He said it

didn't matter how much inventory was in Eugene because the consequence would be stopped development in Springfield until Eugene's inventory was consumed. He said he didn't believe there was an intent that should occur.

Mr. Carpenter said if the end product was to move the UGB, figures would be needed from Eugene to justify that change.

Mr. Mott said he didn't know the answer to that now. He said the last time a similar scenario was presented under periodic review, Springfield was required to do a commercial lands inventory because Eugene had completed their own. When Springfield's inventory determined that based on the assumptions on employment growth, Springfield did not have an adequate commercial lands inventory to accommodate a twenty-year horizon, the state accepted that reality and Springfield's conclusion that we had to create more commercial acreage. He said he didn't feel it was accurate to state that impacts on our own community could not be considered without having a simultaneous impact on the other community. He noted that other options may or may not be able to be pursued in regard to this study.

Mr. Carpenter asked if there could be a cooperative effort to have consistent data for the whole metro area in undertaking this large study.

Mayor Leiken said there was not an interest from the policy makers in Eugene.

Mr. Beyer said determining how much land Springfield wanted available for the development of housing to meet the needs of young families was a policy choice by the Council with the advice of the Planning Commission. It would be nice if Eugene and others participated, but he said he was tired of waiting. Springfield needed to take care of our own.

Mr. Carpenter said he didn't want a study on the shelf that couldn't be used in the future.

Mr. Beyer said Springfield seemed to have an insufficient supply of land as suggested by the market with the high price of residential lots and homes.

Mr. Mott said this information would never be worthless. At the least, the City would have contemporary information for those that needed that information, such as City Council, developers, or housing providers. The information would be accurate and could include data fields that could be retrieved for those requesting it. It could be updated on an annual basis. He said it had nothing to do with the UGB.

Councilor Woodrow said he was not sure he agreed with Mr. Carpenter. It would be nice if it were a collaborative process. It seemed logical that if Springfield did this study and had that information available, Springfield would set the standard for other surrounding communities to do the same thing. Springfield needed to do this because of our shortage of land. Taking the inventory would be the first step for any other future action.

Ms. Decker said there were provisions in the Metro Plan that addressed that each jurisdiction had its own needs that couldn't be blocked by other jurisdictions. She said Springfield had a good argument that we needed to expand the residential land. She didn't believe the state would block that in any way, especially once the facts and figures were available.

Mr. Moe said the Planning Commission and City Council met a year ago and discussed Springfield being more independent in the Metro Plan.

Councilor Pishioneri said independence was important. Springfield needed to do its own problem solving and take care of ourselves. If Eugene had extra lands and Springfield had no lands, Eugene would be in a position of control. He said Springfield could justify the growth ahead of us. There was no need to look at it in a regional aspect.

Councilor Lundberg asked about the buildable lands study that was done in the past. She asked if Eugene had done it first and then Springfield was required by the state to follow.

Mr. Mott said the information about commercial and industrial lands from the 1987 periodic review was low. A special advisory committee was established to look at industrial land and natural resources. Independent of that, Eugene undertook and completed an evaluation of their commercial land. That gave them a statistical advantage over Springfield because of the information they had acquired. Springfield could not provide that information to the State, so the State directed Springfield to undertake an analysis of our commercial lands so the whole study would be concluded. They left off industrial because there was an apparent surplus, so it was not necessary. They brought in residential during the 1994 periodic review which was done metro wide. Both Eugene and Springfield had residential inventory sites and assigned density values to their residential inventories based on their own Council direction. He explained Springfield's direction regarding residential lands, including flood plain areas and lot sizes. Those influences resulted in a static level of information about the residential land in Springfield and Eugene. Together they could accommodate the planning horizon of twenty years. Growth projections for each community seemed to be on the same track. No one assumed that either Springfield or Eugene would accommodate residential increases that were different than historic trends. He discussed the commercial land inventory and the need for Springfield to increase that inventory.

Councilor Lundberg said if Springfield were to do the RLI study, there could be the opportunity that the State would require Eugene to do the same thing. She agreed with the list of people suggested for the committee.

Mr. Mott said Springfield was required to do a residential lands inventory analysis for periodic review, which was completed. Changes were made and adopted in 1999. He said there would be no requirement for the City of Eugene to make another residential lands analysis, but only to evaluate the impact on residential inventory since the 1999 adoption to analyze the affect.

Councilor Fitch said the schedule was very aggressive for the RLI. She agreed with Commissioner Beyer that the definitions needed to be consistent with the Metro Plan for Springfield and redefining that if needed. She said trying to get that done by April 6 and April 20 could be a challenge and good information needed to come in from the technical committee to do that. Even with the aggressive schedule, it would be a year or more before additional land would be in the inventory. She said she didn't want to go too fast and get a product that would not hold up through the process.

Ms. Decker said she was concerned about the challenges of some of the land in the areas Springfield could look at to develop in the future when expanding. We needed to consider what

the most affordable way would be for the City of Springfield to move forward and how expensive it would be to put our infrastructure in those areas.

Councilor Shaver suggested the City consider doing a two-part look: 1) how many acres were available to build on now and what was needed; and 2) policy decisions on options such as lot sizes, annexation, expanding the UGB, etc.

Councilor Ballew said it was an ambitious schedule, but she agreed staff needed to go forward with the study. She suggested including someone on the committee that was good on economics. It needed to be considered how much money people would have to invest in houses. She discussed the average income of Springfield citizens and asked if people would be able to afford housing. She asked to see the supply and demand side. She said there were pockets in Springfield where the land could be more valuable than the improvements and redevelopment could occur in those areas.

Region 2050:

Mayor Leiken acknowledged Lane County Commissioner Faye Stewart and Mayor Gary Williams from Cottage Grove.

Councilor Lundberg said she sat in on the Region 2050 meetings for several years. She said at the last meeting, they had looked at recommendations that came out as an overall map with redistribution of populations and economics. It was clear that this was a voluntary commitment. Several members at the meeting noted that this plan had not been shared with the Councils. It was discussed that moving forward with Region 2050 at this time would require a lot of money or a significant investment in terms of taking a look at all of the concepts included on that map. She felt they could come to a point of agreement, but asked how much time should be put into that if it was voluntary. She said the State would not begin rule making on this process. She referred to Ballot Measure 37 and the "Big Picture Look" of land using planning. She said the State was not ready to take on regional problem solving in terms of rule making. She said it was important for her to come back to the Council to look for direction and feedback on whether or not Springfield should stay in the process and what that would mean.

Commissioner Beyer noted the amount of work that had been done resulting in the draft plan in front of them. He asked what value there was in submitting this plan to the Land Conservation Development Commission (LCDC). If a community chose to have the plan amended, the value would be in that they could choose to amend it based on adoption of the strategy and all of the five or six factors included. We would be bound by that rather than the State goals. He questioned the value of doing anything else.

Councilor Lundberg said that had not been agreed upon. At the last meeting, there were concerns about the concept, because it was put together by staff and had not been discussed by elected officials and the community. A specific discussion was not held at the Region 2050 meeting regarding the document. Each member would take it back to their elected officials to see what they wanted or didn't want, and what they might want changed. She said the plan included a lot of communities and had not yet been agreed upon.

Commissioner Beyer said he did not care for the proposal for Springfield.

Councilor Lundberg said her concern was that this was not what Springfield wanted.

Mayor Leiken discussed conceptual plans and the original design of Beltline. People could talk in concepts, but we needed to speak in reality.

Commissioner Shaver said he opposed the Region 2050 and noted the cost involved. He said unless there was a vision for the region that all jurisdictions agreed upon, this would not be valuable. He said we should have stopped months ago, and we should stop now.

Councilor Ralston said he agreed. Springfield's idea of regional benefit was going to be very different than other local areas. Springfield had nothing to gain and it just added potential restrictions. He said he was not sure why Springfield went into it this far.

Councilor Pishioneri agreed. He said he did not know the whole history and still had a lot to learn about this, but it reminded him of the Metro Plan and the difficulties involved with that. He said this looked like another collaborative great plan offering to help Springfield. He said he didn't recall that Springfield needed help. He said it was another review process even if it was voluntary. He said he didn't see the need for that kind of assistance.

Councilor Ballew said she worked on this at the beginning and from the beginning it was to be voluntary. She noted, however, that it seemed to include binding intergovernmental agreements. She noted the difficulties in getting regional members to agree in the Metro Plan and how much more difficult it would be with ten other jurisdictions. She referred to the State rules that said a regional problem solving mechanism needed to be in place, but we didn't need to join it. She said she appreciated the work done and felt there was some good information that came out of it. She said she would like Springfield to step out of this process.

Commissioner Carpenter said what made planning so unique was that different geographic areas were more prone to one kind of element or another. The problem here was that each city in the plan could look alike, but in different sizes. The reason to do something like this would be to direct the best resources to best areas, but none of the areas were better than the others. Because the plan was voluntary and based on assumptions from six years ago, he didn't feel a fifty year plan could be done. He said there were too many variables that would drive development one way or another. He agreed that no one would gain anything if it was all voluntary and no one signed anything. No areas around Lane County were that much better or worse than the rest. He said he didn't feel any more time should be wasted on this.

Mayor Leiken discussed the TransPlan and that one of the main ideas of the plan was to reduce vehicle miles traveled. Based on some of the concepts of the Region 2050 plan was a lot of growth in outlying areas. If most of the jobs were in the Eugene and Springfield area, it would cause additional vehicle miles traveled. He felt the Region 2050 plan had a tendency to go against TransPlan.

Commissioner Decker said this came back to the subject of the RLI. The fact that the RLI had been used up significantly was reflected in the huge amount of development going in to Veneta, Coburg and the other communities around Springfield and Eugene. The kinds of decisions made here would impact all the communities. She said she understood the core drive for a regional plan because what happened in the city affected everyone eventually. She said it was not clear

how this process addressed that issue. If the plan replaced the Metro Plan, it could be something to consider. She said she did not support Region 2050.

Commissioner Beyer said he agreed. Trying to do something in two cities was difficult enough. Each council should have the right to make policy decisions for their own community. He said coordination was great, but in the end each individual community needed to make the decisions that would work best for them.

Councilor Lundberg said she agreed. She said there was a lot to appreciate about the information received from this process. She discussed some of that information. She said there were opportunities for regional problem solving, but it should be for small, specific problems. She gave the example of wastewater. She said this plan was too broad and took on every issue. She would like Springfield to remain a partner at the table for any defined regional problem solving. She said she would like to put together a letter to formalize tonight's discussion that would state that the City of Springfield did not want to continue with the Region 2050 process. This letter would be mailed to the other Region 2050 members.

Mayor Leiken asked if anyone from the Planning Commission or City Council objected to Springfield pulling out of the Region 2050.

Councilor Pishioneri asked what ramifications or significant impacts would occur to the other partnering communities if Springfield backed out of this plan.

Mayor Leiken suggested Springfield elected officials talk with other elected officials to find out that answer. He asked if the letter should come under Business from the Council during the Regular Meeting.

Ms. Pappas said that would work well.

Mayor Leiken said he would bring it up during Business from the Council.

Councilor Fitch thanked the Planning Commission for joining their meeting.

Ms. Pappas said staff could include information on possible impacts for the other partnering communities in a Communication Packet for the Council and to the Planning Commission.

Mayor Leiken thanked the Planning Commission for joining the City Council.

ADJOURNMENT

The City Council meeting was adjourned by Mayor Leiken at 7:00 pm.

The Planning Commission meeting was adjourned by Chair Cole at 7:00 pm.

Minutes Recorder – Amy Sowa

Sidney W. Leiken
Mayor

Attest:

Amy Sowa
City Recorder